

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for contaminant and water removal from crude oil. The method involves recirculating at least a portion of the dewatered crude into a dehydrator. The dehydrator contains a heated dehydrated crude oil and the surface or adjacent thereto is maintained at a temperature sufficient to vaporize any water contacting the surface from crude oil to be treated in the dehydrator. It has been found important to maintain a substantially uniform temperature at or below the vaporizing surface in order to effectively treat crude oil for dewatering purposes. Significant temperature fluctuations are typically realized by dehydrators since heat enthalpy is removed in order to vaporize the water in the crude oil. Such fluctuations lead to process complications and upset and are therefore undesirable. The instant invention recognizes this limitation and substantially reduces foaming and provides for a smoothly running and efficient dehydration process.